

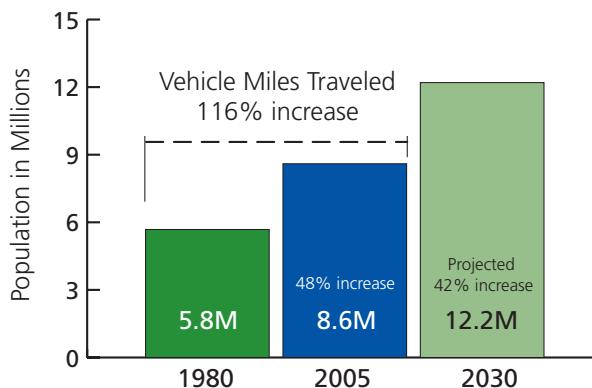


## Moving Beyond Congestion

In an ideal world, North Carolina would have enough money to pay for each new road needed to accommodate our growth. But that is not the case.

The consideration of toll roads provides a more immediate solution to speed up construction of select highway projects that will reduce congestion and provide a more enjoyable travel experience. And those motorists who prefer not to pay tolls will still have the option to travel on a free alternate route.

### Population Growth in North Carolina



## At a Glance

### Toll Roads in North Carolina

- The North Carolina Turnpike Authority is currently studying the feasibility of several new potential toll roads.
- Less than 1 percent of the highway projects included in the North Carolina Transportation Improvement Program will be considered for development as a toll road.
- The NCTA cannot toll existing roads and bridges.
- Every toll road must have a free alternate route.
- Before the NCTA will consider a project for development, it must receive a recommendation from local officials that the road/bridge construction project be studied as a toll facility.
- Toll roads will be developed following the same planning and environmental approval processes as NCDOT highway construction projects. However, NCDOT projects must compete on a regional or statewide basis for limited state and federal transportation funds, while NCTA projects will be financed in part through the sale of bonds.
- Funding from the sale of bonds will pay only part of the construction cost for toll roads. Other local or state funds will still be needed to develop the project.
- The cost of tolls will be determined by the cost of the construction and maintenance of the project.
- By law, tolls will be eliminated once the debt on the roadway has been paid.
- North Carolina toll roads will use new technologies to ensure that traffic moves quickly and efficiently. In many areas, motorists will be able to pay the toll without stopping.



## Moving Beyond Congestion: Offering Motorists a Choice



“This is about choices. There simply aren’t enough state and federal funds to keep up with demands to build more highways.”

David Joyner  
NCTA Executive Director

## Maintaining the Good Roads State

North Carolina has a long-standing reputation as the “good roads” state. With the nation’s second-largest network of state-maintained highways, it is a reputation that has been well earned through the years.

But it is becoming increasingly difficult for our highway system to keep pace with the state’s rapid growth. The state’s mild climate, natural beauty and booming economy are bringing new people to North Carolina every day; the population grew 48 percent in the past 25 years and is expected to grow another 42 percent during the next 25 years. That growth is bringing more cars—and more congestion—to our highways.

Transportation planners recently identified more than \$85 billion of new transportation projects that need to be built over the next 25 years to accommodate that growth. However, projected revenues will allow the state to fund only approximately 65 percent of those projects, creating a \$30 billion shortfall that threatens to delay the construction of many critical new roads. Without these new roads, we may find ourselves facing more congestion than ever before.

Toll roads can provide alternative funding to support new road construction and significantly reduce traffic congestion.

## Offering Motorists a Choice

Given the tremendous need for new roads and highways, North Carolina faces an important choice: find additional funding sources that can accelerate construction of some critical highways or instead wait years, perhaps decades, until funds are available to build these roads through traditional means.

The challenge is not unique.

In an effort to fund new highway construction, many states have successfully turned to toll roads as a viable alternative. Currently, there are more than 5,000 miles of toll roads in 35 states, including South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia and Maryland. In fact, every state along the East Coast from Florida to Maine—except North Carolina—uses toll roads to supplement existing state-built roads.

## How the Process Works

The North Carolina Turnpike Authority is authorized to study and build up to nine toll roads or bridges. While several projects are currently being studied for tolling, only those that meet the following criteria may be considered:

- Every toll road must have a free alternate route so motorists may choose to travel on either a toll or free road;
- Existing roads and bridges cannot be tolled; and
- Local officials or planning organizations must request projects be considered as a toll facility.

While local officials may request that the Turnpike Authority consider a road or bridge for development as a toll road, requests would typically involve congested areas where new roads or bridges would prove financially feasible.

After receiving the request for study, the NCTA will conduct detailed financial feasibility studies, as well as all required environmental studies, before approving any project for development as a toll facility. This process must be thorough and efficient to determine if a proposed project meets the demands of financial investors.

